

May 28, 2014

Laura Peters
Senior Engineer, Water Resources
California Department of Water Resources

Sent via email only to: Laura.Peters@water.ca.gov

Re: Comments on the Water-Energy Grant Program Criteria

Ms. Peters:

On behalf of the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Energy Network (“BayREN”), I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed Water-Energy Grant Program guidelines and selection criteria. BayREN is a collaboration of public agencies representing all nine counties within the San Francisco Bay Area. BayREN draws on the experience and expertise of Bay Area local governments to design and implement effective energy and water savings programs. The Association of Bay Area Governments (“ABAG”) is the administrator of BayREN.

We offer the following suggestions to the guidelines:

1. Prioritize regional programs: As codified in Water Code §10544, grant funding authorized for water management activities shall include in any set of criteria used to select projects or programs for funding, a preference for regional projects or programs. The BayREN currently implements Pay-as-You-Save (PAYS®), a unique on-bill energy/water efficiency program. Operating within the constraints of a small program budget, we have been able to partner with three different water utilities in our region. Part of the success of this program has been the ability to work in collaboration with our local government BayREN members, and leverage their relationships with the water utilities within their jurisdictions. Regional programs and projects should be given preference in the selection process given the statutory mandate as well as the great potential to achieve significant reductions by creating economies of scale and tapping into existing relationships.
2. An expedited schedule: California is facing “an unprecedented dry period” prompting Governor Brown to declare a Drought State of Emergency. The current schedule provides the announcement of the award(s) to take place one year from now. The BayREN requests that the time periods for application preparation and review be shortened to 30 days, the public workshops be scheduled in a shorter time frame, and that the announcement of the award is made within four to five

months from the issuance of the Guidelines. The dire situation facing our state requires that reduction activities commence as soon as possible.

The BayREN also joins in the comments of the Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority. We look forward to reviewing the draft guidelines and continued engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jennifer Berg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer K. Berg
BayREN Program Manager